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EYRE, JOHN
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CHARITY

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CHARITY:

A Poem.

BY JOHN EYRE.

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1 Cor. XIII. Chap.

I ask not to speak with the tongue of an Angel,
Tho' that should seem great in the sight of all men,
Nor the art to perfection to play on the cymbal
Could I charm the whole earth both now and again.

Not prophesy of future tho' tell a good fortune,
Nor to speak of all myst'ries in nature or art,
Nor for faith to remove the earth, or the mountain,
Or to tell when the Heavens and earth shall depart!

And it is naught to give my goods to the stranger;
Or offer my Body to be burnt in the flame,
If one thing is wanting! O! save me from languor,
To speak once of Charity, tho' no other name.

O! Charity, thou fair one, I speak of thy beauties,
Thou mother of virtues, tho' purchased by blood,
O! essence of goodness, when abstract from all creatures,
The only thing needful to make me like God.

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Hark, reader, and listen, have you heard her name spoken?
Has any one told you of Charity's fame?
Her character is such and this is the token,
She remains through all time and Eternity the same.

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She suffereth long, and still manifests kindness,
No anger or malice remains in her breast,
She pardons the hand that smote her with blindness,
And points the hard tyrant to Him who gives rest.

She envieth not, though others are increasing,
Though their flocks and their herds are on every hand,
For her joy is in God and she prays without ceasing,
And looks for her lot in the heavenly land.

She vaunts not herself in the castle of greatness,
Nor boasts of her parentage, family, or fame,
Nor will she speak roughly or with any lightness,
When she speaks with the hero, the blind, or the lame.

In carriage becoming, in countenance modest,
In costume and head-dress she's decent and clean;
While in her demeanor her actions speak loudest,
Yet the grace thro' her face may always be seen.

She's not puffed up tho' her costume is noble,
Which consists in its quality, neatness, and make;
In patience and meekness she sits at the table,
But asks no rude questions for conscience's sake.

In such a position she behaves not unseemly,
Tho' untaught in manners of the fashionable school,
So modest and meek tho' the hour is untimely,
That her actions are squared by sanctity's rule.

She seeks not her own, but is ready in giving,
To the widow and orphan, and needy one's cry,
Like Mary, Joanna, and Susanna while living,
Who gave unto Jesus,* while others passed by!

Nor is she provoked though others insult her,
Her patience being proof 'gainst all that she meets,
Tho' misfortune assails and she's borne down with languor,
She meekly bears all as she passes the streets.

She thinketh no evil tho' much to complain of,
"It's impossible but that offences will come,"
She casts the veil over what others proclaim on,
Who foolishly triumph when evil is done.

"Not in iniquity,"—No, that be far from her,
But rejoices to hear a lesson of truth,
To this she will listen and not soon grow weary,
And would tell the contents to the aged or youth.

She beareth all things tho' unpleasant to nature,
She believeth all things in the volume of truth;
She hopeth all things will be well in the future,
And endureth all things thro' the power of faith.

* Luke viii. 3.

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She never faileth altho' other things perish,
And prophecies spoken shall utterly fail,
Altho' tongues shall soon cease and knowledge shall vanish,
Yet Charity will live, and truth ever prevail.

O! Charity, thou blest one, now let me behold thee,
And imbibe in my person thy beauty and form,
For as yet I have look'd but as thro' a glass darkly,
And never have known thee as myself I have known.

But in all, there are three whose names we should cherish,
And hold thro' this vale to the Canaan above,
They are faith, hope, and love, lest we finally perish,
But the greatest is Charity, whose nature is love.

New York, August 18, 1853.

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